

Fall 2001

► The *School Food Services News* is back, but in a different format. Three issues, fall (September), winter (January) and spring (April) will be available on our section's Web page.

NEWS

School Food Services

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**Click here to contact
our staff:**

[www.dese.state.mo.us/
divadm/food/
staff.html](http://www.dese.state.mo.us/divadm/food/staff.html)



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National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs

FINAL RULE: Additional Menu Planning Approaches

On May 9, 2000, the USDA published the final rule on "Any Reasonable Approach" under the title of *National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program: Additional Menu Planning Approaches*.

The final regulation mirrors the proposed rule with a few minor modifications. Following is a brief summary of some of the key provisions:

- Incorporates the traditional food based menu-planning (TFBMP) approach as a permanent menu-planning option.
- Adopts the proposed minimum requirements for nutrient levels under TFBMP.
- Permits alternate menu-planning approaches that include two distinct classes: (1) minor modifications to established menu-planning approaches; (2) major or unique proposals that depart "significantly" from existing approaches.

The minor class involves three possible modifications to the Food Based Menu Planning (FBMP) options for lunch only. Local Education Agencies (LEAs) can make one or more of these modifications to their existing FBMP approach without being subject to state or federal pre-approval.

The three modifications are:

1. Majority of Children (One age/grade group outside)*

Schools using FBMP, either traditional or enhanced, may use the age/grade grouping (with its corresponding portion size requirements) for the majority of the children as long as only one age or grade is outside the established level.

2. Age/Grade Group (Nutrient levels K-6, 7-12)*

Schools using traditional FBMP can adopt the nutrient standard developed for the other menu-planning approaches. See table below.

3. Meat/Meat Alternate (Meat/Meat Alternate Modification)* Required minimum quantities of meat/meat alternate component may be offered as a weekly total with a one-ounce (or its equivalent for certain meat alternates) minimum daily serving size.

Counting total weekly contributions of meat/meat alternate will not be extended to school breakfast menus.

*(The wording in parenthesis is how the modification is identified on the Menu-Planning Section – Part 7 on the Web Application Agreement.)

| For Grades | Portion Sizes Used | Nutrient Standards |
|------------|--|--|
| K-6 | Portion sizes for Traditional FBMP grades 4-12 | Use Nutrient Standards for grades K-6 from the other menu planning approaches (NSMP/ANSMP, enhanced FBMP) |
| 7-12 | Portion sizes for Traditional FBMP grades 4-12 | Use nutrient standards for grades 7-12 from the other menu planning approaches (NSMP/ANSMP, enhanced FBMP) |

The second class involves major modifications to one of the four existing menu-planning approaches or development of an entirely new menu-planning approach.

Any major changes or alternate menu approaches developed by the LEA would be subject to the review and approval of the State agency. LEAs would be required to submit a written plan to the State agency as a basis for review.

All alternate menu approaches in this second class must:

- Offer fluid milk;
- Meet the Recommended Dietary Allowances and lunch-time energy allowances (nutrient levels) and indicate the age/grade groups served and how the nutrient levels are met for those age/grade groups;
- Include offer *versus* serve for senior high students. Alternate menu-planning approaches choosing not to follow established offer versus serve procedures must indicate: (A) The affected age/grade groups; (B) The number and type of items that constitute a reimbursable lunch under offer *versus* serve; (C) How such procedures will reduce plate waste; and (D) How a reasonable level of calories and nutrients for the lunch as taken is provided;
- Follow competitive food requirements;
- Identify a reimbursable lunch or breakfast at the point of service;
- Explain how the alternate approach can be monitored;
- Follow the requirement for weighted analysis and for approved software for nutrient standard menu-planning approaches.

Other aspects of the final rule:

- It was decided not to extend the grain-based dessert provision to the traditional FBMP approach. This provision continues to allow only enhanced FBMP to count one grain-based dessert each day towards the weekly total.
- The required weighted averages in analyzing menus is suspended through Sept. 30, 2003.

USDA Announces Reimbursement Rates

Federal assistance rates of reimbursement as announced by USDA for the period July 1, 2001, to June 30, 2002 are at:

[www.dese.state.mo.us/divadm/food/
reimbrates.htm](http://www.dese.state.mo.us/divadm/food/reimbrates.htm)

Food Buying Guide

The new *Food Buying Guide (FBG) for Child Nutrition Programs* will be available by early 2002. The USDA will ship one copy to each LEA along with an order form so additional copies can be ordered for each of your schools.

The 2002 FBG has a great new look, with an updated design, including color-coded tabs for each section, pictures, new charts and graphics. There are hundreds of new food items and new pack sizes for existing foods. Appendices have been added that include information on recipe analysis, child nutrition labeling and food purchasing. Also, a new resource section includes useful Web pages and information on food service, food preparation, food safety and menu-planning publications.

2000-2001 CRE Results

During the 2000-01 school year, 169 Coordinated Review Efforts (CRE's) were conducted. There were 28 LEAs or 17 percent that did not meet the performance standard thresholds for errors.

CRE consists of two performance standards. Performance Standard 1 states that all free, reduced price and full price lunches claimed for reimbursement are served only to children eligible for free, reduced price and full price lunches, respectively; and are counted, recorded, consolidated and reported through a system which consistently yields correct claims. Performance Standard 2 states that all lunches claimed for reimbursement contain food items/components as required by program regulations.

Performance Standard 1 was not met in all of the 28 LEAs mainly due to errors in the meal counting procedures. It is extremely important that all meal counts be accurate and taken at the point of service. Please evaluate your current meal counting system to ensure that point of service meal counts are obtained.

To assist LEAs with ensuring that an acceptable meal counting system is in place, a current Methods of Collection and Meal Counting form must be on file in our office. This form (Policy Attachment E) is available in the *Free and Reduced Price Meal Application and Direct Certification* handbook that was mailed in May. The handbook and form are also available on our section's Web site. Please note that a new form does not need to be sent to our office each year, unless you change your current meal counting and collection procedures.

Computerized Meal Count Systems

Check out the new "Computerized Meal Count Systems" button on our Web page. A list was compiled of the LEAs using a computerized point of service system from the information reported to us on the Methods of Collection and Meal Counting form. The company contact information and the number of LEAs using that company have been provided. Currently, 325 LEAs out of 772 use a computerized system.

Over-Certification

Over the past year, several data sources have indicated that a significant and increasing number of children certified for free and reduced meals in the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) are not income-eligible for the program. This problem results in the misdirection of United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) meal reimbursement funds, state and federal funds and, in some cases, local education funds.

If an ineligible child is approved for free meals and eats regularly, USDA spends more than \$300 per year in excess of the amount for which the household was income-eligible. If one ineligible child participated in every school in the United States, it would cause \$200,000 per day going toward ineligible meals. Compounding the issue are the growing federal, state and local programs using lunch data to send dollars to school districts.

This trend of over-certification has been disclosed through audit survey work by the USDA Office of Inspector General, and more recently through the USDA Food and Nutrition Service's (FNS) Office of Analysis, Nutrition and Evaluation (OANE) report on its comparison of free and reduced price certifications in the NSLP with the income-eligible population at large. The results of the OANE report show a disturbing trend. Comparisons of NSLP data from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey (CPS), suggest that the number of children determined eligible for free meals in the NSLP exceeds the number of children that the CPS data identifies as potentially eligible. The data indicate that free certifications for the NSLP as a percentage of CPS

estimated eligibles have been increasing for several years.

FNS is educating the federal, state

and local education community, as well as the school food service community, about the magnitude of the problem. They are identifying possible courses of action that could be considered within current constraints. USDA is also conducting several pilot projects designed to test alternatives to the existing free and reduced price meal eligibility procedures.

Missouri schools have done an excellent job of correctly approving and correctly disapproving free and reduced price meal benefit forms. This has been demonstrated through our section's on-site administrative reviews. It is rare to find a school that has incorrectly approved a significant number of applications.

We at the State agency, along with USDA, are concerned when issues arise that focus on the integrity of the programs we administer. To be proactive in the state of Missouri we did emphasize the concern with over-certification at all our summer 2001 workshops. Classes were taught at our directors/managers trainings that were specific to correct approval of meal benefit forms, the verification process and the issue of over-certification.

Steps that LEAs can take to reduce the likelihood that households will receive benefits to which they are not entitled.

- Increase the number of verifications
- Verify applications when submitted
- Choose aggressively to verify any applications that local school personnel regard as suspicious
- Consider the use of focus sampling
- Implementation of direct certification
- Proper use and follow-up on all temporary approvals

Please refer to *The Free and Reduced Price Guidance and Verification Guidance* handbooks on our Web site.

Eligibility and Foreign Exchange Students

At this time of year, we receive many questions regarding free meals for foreign exchange students.

A foreign exchange student is counted as a member of the household in which he/she resides, (i.e., the household hosting the student). Therefore, the household size and total household income are considered in the eligibility determination.

A school district may provide free meals for the foreign exchange student but claim the student in the category for which he/she is eligible. Funding to pay Food Service for these free meals sometimes comes from a sponsoring organization in the school or the school district.

| National data | Missouri data |
|---------------|---------------|
| 1993 – 100% | 1993 – 84% |
| 1994 – 106% | 1994 – 94% |
| 1995 – 110% | 1995 – 103% |
| 1996 – 116% | 1996 – 108% |
| 1997 – 118% | 1997 – 107% |
| 1998 – 123% | 1998 – 119% |
| 1999 – 129% | 1999 – (NA) |



Important Links

MSFSA Web Site

The School Food Service's Web page now has a link to the Missouri School Food Service Association's Web site. The link is at the bottom of our homepage listed under *Additional Sites of Interest*. MSFSA Web address is www.mfsfa.net. (See page 5 of this newsletter for Director's Workshop registration form.)

Satellite Programs

Every year the National Food Service Management Institute (NFSMI) presents Satellite seminars in April and October and live interactive teleconferences in January and August. A link to the NFSMI's homepage is on our Web site at www.dese.state.mo.us/divadm/food/index.html. At NFSMI link, click on Educational Opportunities.

New Supervisor Welcomed

The School Food Services Section is pleased to announce the addition of **Laina Strothmann**. Laina is a registered dietitian and originally from Ohio. She will be the supervisor for the Northeast region. Welcome aboard!

Menu-Planning Methods

The menu-planning method that each LEA currently is using has been pre-set on the Web Application Agreement (Part 7 – Menu Planning). The menu-planning option that is selected is based on the most current information on file in our office. If you change your menu-planning option or make any modifications you must notify our office so that we can update the information on the Web.

Best Practices Award Winner

The USDA sponsors annually a "Best Practices Awards" program to recognize outstanding practices in schools that participate in the National School Breakfast/School Lunch/After School Snack programs. Schools may submit entries in one or several categories.

This year a Missouri school received one of the awards in the USDA Mountain Plains Region, competing with schools in nine other states.

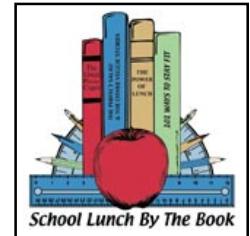
Jefferson Elementary, Farmington R-VII School District, received the award in the *Team Nutrition* category. **Helen Duncan**, food service director, submitted the nomination. The project goal was to teach the students the importance of good eating habits they can carry with them the rest of their lives. Students, teachers and the community were involved. **The USDA Regional Director recently presented the award to Jefferson Elementary staff.**

Submit one or more of the outstanding practices in your school. Nominations for the Best Practices Award may be submitted in the spring of 2001-2002. Watch this newsletter for the announcement of the competition.

National School Lunch Week

When you were a child, did you ever read a "Pick Your Own Adventure" book? As the story twists and turns you decide what step the hero or heroine takes next. Which door will they open? Which path will they follow?

When you celebrate National School Lunch Week, Oct. 15-19, 2001, you can pick your own adventure by serving up "School Lunch: By the Book." Books provide the information, data and creative dreams that are absolute requirements for a growing child. They nourish the mind and fill the imagination, similar to the nutrients found in healthful foods that help children grow and develop.



National School Lunch Week is one of the greatest public relations tools at your disposal. This year's theme presents the perfect opportunity to promote your program and the importance of child nutrition while at the same time ensuring your community understands that education and child nutrition go hand-in-hand.

Listed below are a few suggested menus. For more menus, recipes and information on how you can promote National School Lunch Week 2001, visit: www.asfsa.org/meetingsandevents.

Detective Diner

Nancy Drew Drumstick
P.I. Mashed Potatoes
Corn & Carrot Clues
Encyclopedia Brown Biscuit
On-the-Case Fruit Crisp
Magnifying Glass Milk

Fantasy Fare

Harry Potter Pocket
Cavern Coleslaw
Dirty Dragon Potatoes
Quidditch (Fruit) Cup
Castle Cookie
Magic Milk

Missouri School Food Service Association **Director's Workshop**

Monday, October 22, 2001

8:30 a.m.- 4:00 p.m.

(Registration: 8:30-9:00 a.m.)

• • •

Chateau on the Lake
415 State Highway 265
Branson, Missouri 65616

Featuring

★ Commodities in Missouri . . . What is New?

*Presented by Mick Lunzer on the Fish Philosophy –
Catch the Energy*

MSFSA Director's Workshop Registration Form

Name _____

District _____

School Mailing Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone Numbers (Work) _____ (Home) _____

Membership Number _____ E-mail Address _____

Social Security Number _____ - _____ - _____

Payment (check or purchase order) must accompany this form – no cash, please.

Return completed form and payment to: Betty Culley, 606 Foxridge Dr., Raymore, Missouri 64083.
Fax 816-322-7136 • E-mail Bandjo7@msn.com • Phone 816-331-9109 or 800-484-9202 (Code 0509)

Make checks payable to: MSFSA

\$70 Member/\$90 Non-member: Check # _____ Purchase Order # _____
You may also register on-line with purchase order or credit card at: (www.msfsa.net).

For hotel reservations contact: The Chateau on the Lake in Branson at 888-333-LAKE (toll free).
Mention that you are with MSFSA for our special room rate of \$104.